



On Ice Helpers

Each year more and more young people are interested in volunteering with our amateur hockey programs. Most are adolescents who want to collect high school volunteer hours. Others are young adults looking to take on different roles in hockey.

This has left associations and leagues asking themselves important questions. How old should these new, young volunteers be? What equipment must they wear? What training do they require? Etc.

Team officials must use sound judgment when selecting a young person as an on-ice helper. Specifically, these decisions must be made from developmental and support perspectives. These new “helpers” need to learn to provide assistance to other team officials. It is not an opportunity for older players to get extra ice time.

To provide guidance while ensuring safe opportunities for our young “helpers”, please apply the following:

1. An individual who volunteers in an association must be:

- A Hockey Canada registered player of a minor hockey association or junior hockey league, or
- A Hockey Canada on-ice official under age 20.

This ensures that insurance coverage has been secured.

2. He/she may only be a demonstrator/helper and is not to provide instruction. He/she may not participate in any activities with the players such as scrimmages or drills.

3. The individual must be at minimum one age division higher than the team they are volunteering with. (E.g. a Bantam-aged player may help at the Peewee level). He/she is not permitted to volunteer as an on-ice helper with a team at the same or higher age division.

4. The individual must wear, at a minimum, a CSA certified helmet and facial protection (as required by their level of hockey), and a BNQ certified neck guard (as required by their level of hockey) as well as hockey gloves and skates. Although this is the Branch’s minimum requirement, the home association/league may mandate full equipment.

5. an individual who is not a registered team official and who is 16 years of age or older MUST complete the Respect in Sport on-line e-learning program.

6. **“On-Ice Helper” is neither a qualification nor a designation to be used in the Initiation Program or higher levels. Rather, it is limited to those under age 20 who wish to give something back to the game, perhaps become involved in coaching or obtain high school volunteer credit hours.**